

*the GREAT BLESSING of PEACE and
TRUTH in our Days.*

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S E R M O N

PREACHED AT

B E L F A S T,

On TUESDAY, *April* the 25th, 1749,

Being the Day of Public THANKSGIVING for the
P E A C E.

Published at the Desire of some of the Hearers.

By GILBERT KENNEDY, M. A.



D U B L I N:

Printed by JAMES ESDALL, on Cork-Hill, 1749.



2 KINGS XX. 19.

Then said Hezekiah unto Isaiah, Good is the word of the LORD which thou hast spoken; and he said, It is not good if Peace and Truth be in my Days?

THIS king *Hezekiah* is reckoned among the best and most pious of all the *Jewish* kings. From his first entrance on the government, he set himself to reform all the abuses and disorders both in church and state, introduced in the preceding reigns. He restored the true worship of God, and destroyed all the monuments of idolatry; *removed the high places, brake the images, cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brazen serpent*, which in the preceding times of iniquity had been perverted into an object of idolatrous worship. Under his administration the kingdom of *Judah* was in a most flourishing condition, *for the Lord was with him, and he prospered whithersoever he went forth*, in all the wars which he was constrained to undertake in defence of the liberties of his country; particularly against the *Assyrian* monarch; from whose invasion he met with a very remarkable deliverance without being obliged to strike one blow; God sending a destroying *Angel*, or a *blast*

as it is called, *Isa. xxxvii. 7.* upon the *Assyrian* army in the night; so that no less than an hundred fourscore and five thousand were found dead corpses in the morning; which obliged the haughty tyrant to raise the siege of *Jerusalem*, and retire with precipitation to his own land. We have an account particularly in this chapter of two very signal favours granted him, as the reward of his steady piety and virtue. *First*, when he was at the point of death, he had a message by the prophet *Isaiab*, that an addition should be made to his life of fifteen years; which must have been equally joyful to the whole nation, as himself; that so good a king, under whom they had been so happy and prosperous, was to be longer continued among them. And, *Secondly*, he had a promise given him that his country should enjoy peace and quietness during his reign; though afterwards, the prophet tells him, it should fall a prey to the *Babylonians*; occasioned by his own vanity and pride, in treating the *Babylonian* ambassadors who were sent to congratulate him on his recovery, with such pomp and magnificence, and shewing them all his wealth and treasures; which he might well think would invite them to endeavour to make themselves masters of them. *Behold*, saith the prophet, *the days come that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried unto Babylon; nothing shall be left, saith the Lord. And of thy sons, that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away, and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon, Vers. 17, 18.*

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THIS mortifying message the pious *Hezekiah* received with the utmost humility and resignation; acknowledging at the same time with the highest gratitude the divine goodness, in that the destruction foretold by the prophet was to be respited for some time, and not immediately to take place; that he himself was not to be a spectator of these disasters and calamities which should befall his family and country; but that he and they should enjoy the benefit of that peace and truth, which it had been the constant attention of his whole life to promote and establish, during his own time. *Good is the word of the Lord, says he, which thou hast spoken; and he said, Is it not good if I have peace and truth in my days?* Not that we are to imagine so good a man could be so selfish and so little public-spirited as to have no regard for posterity; no concern what became of his country when he was gone. One who had been so vigilant and active for the honour of God, the purity of religion, and good of his own country, in his own time, must certainly be presumed to have been sincerely desirous that the benefit of that liberty and truth, which was so dear to him, and which he had been at so much pains to establish, should descend and be transmitted to the most distant Generations. But being assured by the prophet that some time or other his country should be involved in ruin and desolation; he reckons it a single instance of the goodness of God, that he was not to be a spectator of such misery and distress, but that he should be taken away from the evil to come, and enjoy firm peace, and true religion, during his own days.

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THE application of this passage to the present occasion is very natural and obvious. It becomes us of these nations with voice of joy and triumph to celebrate the praises of our almighty guardian that has watched over and preserved our religion and liberties ; by whose good providence we are still in possession of these valuable interests, notwithstanding the repeated attempts of our enemies to undermine and destroy them ; and particularly of *late*, has delivered us from an *intestine* and *foreign* war ; both which for some time had a very threatening aspect, and were justly terrible to every lover of liberty and truth ; so that we have rest from all our enemies, within and without ; and enjoy the comfortable prospect of the secure and quiet possession of our liberty and religion, we hope not only in our own days (which even itself were a most valuable blessing) but of transmitting these intire to future and distant generations. *Is it not good?* Is it not an invaluable blessing, deserving our most grateful praises and thanksgivings, that the enemies of liberty, and of pure reformed Christianity, have been once more defeated in their design of binding upon us the grievous yoke of popery and arbitrary power ; by which means our civil and religious liberties have received an additional strength and security ; and, we trust in HIM who has hitherto helped us, shall be continued and preserved not only in our days, but as long as the name of *Great Britain* shall be heard in the world.

IN discoursing farther from these words, I shall, *First*, consider what we are to understand by peace and truth.

Secondly,

Secondly, shew that the preservation and continuance of our peace and truth is a just foundation for our most affectionate gratitude and thankfulness to God.——And then conclude with some suitable application.

PEACE in general, signifies the quiet and undisturbed enjoyment of our natural and civil rights; and may be distinguished into private and public. Private, is that harmony, friendship and good understanding, subsisting between particular persons, families, and neighbourhoods; founded on the practice of justice and equity; and a mutual intercourse of civilities, and friendly good offices. ---Public peace, regarding communities, and bodies politic, which is that here principally meant; is, either internal, or, external. Internal, opposed to civil feuds and animosities, is founded on the mutual conspiring of the several members of the body politic to one common end, the public good; when all in their several stations with zeal and integrity discharge their respective duties; preferring the general interest to all private and selfish considerations; those in the quality of subjects obeying, not only for wrath but also for conscience sake, the laws framed for public good; and those whom they have constituted their governors faithfully discharging their trust, by being *terrors to evil-doers, and a praise to them that do well*; taking care that the laws be duly executed and justice impartially and uprightly administered; protecting every loyal subject without distinction in the possession of his rights and liberties; and acting always within the bounds of law; arrogating no more power and authority than their constituents

constituents have seen proper to invest them with. Such mutual conspiring of all ranks to promote the common good, each keeping within his own proper sphere, must produce the most delightful concord and harmony ; and be the foundation of inexpressible joy and felicity, resembling that of the perfect, angelic world. Which will be broken in upon by either party turning licentious, and not keeping within their proper bounds ; when the people will not be bound by the laws, but turn factious and rebellious, and fall into tumults and insurrections ; or the governors will rule without and contrary to law, and break through all the securities the people have for the enjoyment of their rights and privileges ; in either of which cases, the party injured, if the other will not hearken to reason, has a right for restoring the constitution, to have recourse to force ; the magistrate, for suppressing rebellion ; the people for restraining the exorbitances of the magistrate, and vindicating their liberties against his tyrannical Usurpations. For it would be hard that civil society should bring men into worse circumstances than they were in, in a state of nature ; by depriving them of the right of Self-defence against such as invade their rights ; though it must be owned, in the present case, forcible measures are not to be precipitately gone into, or warrantable, except in case of extreme necessity.

----Peace external, is that good harmony which subsists between a state and neighbouring communities, who, with regard to each other, are in a state of nature ; founded on the mutual friendly cession of each others rights and liberties ; and the
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inviolable observation of all treaties and compacts.— By truth is to be understood true and pure religion; the belief and worship of the only living and true God, in opposition to idolatry and every species of false religion.—So that what *Hezekiah* is so thankful for, and reckons so desirable a circumstance in his country's case, was, that it still remained a free and independent nation; not enslaved to any foreign power; not disjointed by intestine faction and animosity; but that it still continued, and he had the prospect of its continuing much longer, to be governed by its own laws; and every man sat quietly *under his own vine, and under his own fig-tree*, possessed of his civil rights and privileges, undisturbed by civil contention from within, or hostilities from abroad; and moreover, that it enjoyed not only civil but religious liberty; the purity of religion, and the freedom of worshipping God according to his own institutions and appointments.—Peace and truth then comprehend whatever can be dear and valuable to us as men and christians; liberty, civil and religious; which we have no less reason to boast of, and be thankful for, than this pious and good King had. By the good providence of God, we still enjoy peace and truth, the blessings of civil and religious liberty. We are delivered from an expensive and bloody war abroad, into which our own, and the liberties of *Europe*, that were in eminent danger, constrained us to enter; and we are delivered from a turbulent faction among our selves; which lately rose to such an height as to alarm us with just apprehensions, if not of final ruin to the constitution, at least of be-

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and the victory; who maketh wars to cease to the ends of the earth; who breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear asunder, and burneth the chariots in the fire. Against him there is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor strength. He turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish, and sets bounds to the ambition of proud oppressors, so that they cannot disturb the world any longer than he pleaseth.

BUT I come to the *second* head, to shew, that the preservation and continuance of our peace and truth is a just foundation for our most affectionate gratitude and thankfulness to God. And, to excite our gratitude to him on this occasion, it will be of use to recollect and employ our meditations on these following particulars. *First*, the great and inestimable value of these blessings, peace and truth. *Secondly*, the many dangers and difficulties through which they have been from time to time continued and transmitted to us. And, *thirdly*, that they have been preserved to us, when all other nations almost have been suffered to sink into the most abject slavery and bondage.

First, the great and inestimable value of peace and truth. With regard to peace, how desirable is it to be delivered from a foreign war, attended with so great expence of men and treasure, loss of our commerce abroad, and discouragement of our manufactures at home; the grand sources of the flourishing and prosperity of a nation? And how desirable to have peace not only without but within our borders; so that violence and destruction is no longer heard in our land; but our constitution remains safe, and we have the peaceable en-

Joyment of our civil rights and liberties? For indeed the quiet possession of *civil liberty* is what alone deserves the name of peace. Can a people with any propriety be said to have peace, where tyranny and arbitrary power prevails? Whose lives and properties lie intirely at the mercy and humour of the tyrant, who instead of being the father, is the scourge and terror of his subjects? Those that tamely submit to lawless power may fancy they enjoy peace and quietness; but it is only the shadow of it. For what avails their being protected from foreign insults and invasions, so long as there is a domestic enemy, always preying upon their vitals who makes no other use of his power but to oppress; and whatever encouragement he may speciously give to arts and industry, does it with no generous view to promote the happiness of his subjects; but that he may enrich and aggrandise himself from their spoils, and be able to command at pleasure the means of gratifying his ambition and covetousness? Judge whether people in this condition are in a state of peace or war? Open war indeed there may not be; but surely, if every thing that is manly and generous be not intirely subdued, there must be inward rancour and animosity in their hearts, and a disposition in such people to assert their liberty, whenever it is in their power. There can be no reason for being at peace with a tyrant, I mean that there is not an open rupture, but want of power to resist; which all tyrants are fully sensible of; and therefore take care to secure themselves, and prevent all such accidents, by standing armies; knowing that their thrones are
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not *established by righteousness*. No people then can in any proper sense be said to enjoy peace who are subject to tyranny; and whose lives and properties solely depend on the caprice and will of their sovereign. Thanks to God! this is not our case, we enjoy civil liberty in the fullest extent.

AND what a valuable possession this is, must readily occur to every one who considers the wretched condition of those nations that groan under slavery; or is in the least acquainted with the history of some former reigns in *England*, when some of our kings attempted to break through our constitution, and to govern arbitrarily. Who can read the history of those times, but with the highest indignation and abhorrence of the tyrants, and their cruel proceedings against men, whose only crime was their honesty and integrity, opposing their lawless measures, and incroachments on the constitution, and *bravely refusing to fall down and worship the image of arbitrary power, which they had set up?* How naturally, upon comparison of former times with our own, must this sentiment occur to every person; *is it not good that I have peace in my days?* that I live under a mild and equitable government; tender of the rights and liberties of the subject; never dispensing with the laws, nor attempting any undue stretch of prerogative; that collects no ship-money, raises no subsidies without authority of parliament, grants no monopolies to the ruin of trade, imprisons no persons against law; commits none of those violences, which were heretofore so grievous and oppressive.---The preservation and security of peace and liberty was the
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very original *reason* and *end* of civil government; that, by the united strength and force of many, the lives, liberties, and properties of the several individuals might be more secure against the invasions of unreasonable and injurious men; that justice and fidelity, without which there could be no human society might be maintained and supported; and that such whom reason, conscience, and honour, would not bind, might be compelled by force to act for the good of society.----And surely, if existence be a blessing, this must be so too; to have the peaceable enjoyment of our liberties and properties, and to have these effectually secured against the attempts of the violent and injurious. For what is *life* without *liberty*? *Death* to every person, that has the least manliness and generosity of heart, is more eligible than life in *slavery*. Liberty is generally reckoned so valuable that, to preserve and secure it, all, who are sensible of the sweets of it, are willing to run the greatest hazards. For it they will launch out into all the toils and calamities of war; and chuse rather to lose their lives than part with it. War is far from being eligible, if we consider the bloodshed and desolation that attends it; yet these inconveniencies are willingly submitted to for the preservation and security of liberty and peace. And it is *honourable* so to do. Bravely to resist tyranny and unjust force, in defence of liberty, meets with universal approbation and applause. We cannot read the character of a true patriot, or hear of those *heroes* who have hazarded or lost their lives for their own or country's liberty, without the warmest and most affectionate sentiments

ments of love and esteem. On the other hand those are universally judged contemptible, and lost to all sense of the dignity of human nature, who sit down contentedly under slavery, and stupidly prefer any other worldly interest to liberty. Indeed a man deprived of it can have no other worldly interest worth contending for.

THIS is the general sense of mankind. Love of liberty is a principle implanted and as deeply rooted in human nature as the love of life; nay in every generous mind it is much stronger. All men are born to it, and hold this privilege by the same grant and tenure they do their lives. The contrary indeed has been strenuously contended for by some ambitious kings; and a certain set of men, who, for obvious reasons, have been always ready to do their drudgery, and, to make their court more effectually to them, have endeavoured to pave the way to despotic government in these nations, by propagating and inculcating such goodly principles as these: *That we are all born slaves; and that the king is invested by God with an absolute and incontrollable power over his subjects;* and that it is a damnable sin on any pretence whatsoever for a people to take up arms against the king, be he ever so great a tyrant, whether he keep faith with his subjects or not, whether he acts with or without law. We freely own that while he acts as a king, according to the good and wholesome laws which the society has thought proper to establish, he ought chearfully to be obeyed, and his administration protected against all insults. But when he abuses his power, for oppressing instead of protecting his subjects; has he

he not then *unking'd* himself? Is he not to be considered as a *traitor* to the society; and consequently is not all manner of obligation between him and his subjects intirely dissolved? This is the principle upon which the revolution stands, and our present constitution; and it is perfectly agreeable to the dictates of human nature, to the great laws of self-preservation and resentment, that prompt us to consult our own interest, and vigorously resist all attacks that may be made on our lives and properties. Nor does it give any encouragement to rebellion; for it was never pleaded that every oversight in the supreme magistrate, who is not infallible, will justify such violent measures; but only when the administration is generally and wilfully corrupt; and there appears a plain design through the whole to subvert the constitution. Such slavish principles have no foundation in nature and reason; and certainly revelation cannot contain any doctrine or precept inconsistent with reason, and contrary to a plain and essential law of nature. If we examine christianity, we will find indeed, that it inculcates, as is very reasonable to be believed, obedience to the civil magistrate; *who is the minister of God to us for good, appointed to be a terror to evil-doers, and a praise to them that do well*; and as long as he acts up to his character, agreeably to the true design and intent of his office, resistance no doubt is a great immorality, justly punishable by the magistrate, who is invested with the sword for this very purpose to suppress disturbers of the public peace, such as set themselves to obstruct the due course of

of Law and Justice. But it is not any where said, that if he be a *terror to well-doers, and an encourager of such as do evil*; if the plain design of his administration to *oppress and enslave* instead of *protecting* his subjects in their rights and liberties, that the people may not take the necessary measures for their own preservation and defence. Such a magistrate is the very reverse of a *minister of God*, according to St. Paul's description; and therefore to resist him cannot be resisting God and his ordinance; unless you will say that tyranny and oppression are God's ordinance. If any system pretending to the character of divine revelation contained any such doctrines and principles, this would furnish an argument against the authority of it not very easy to be answered.

Thus we may see the great and inestimable value of *civil liberty*; and no less to be valued is the peaceable possession of *truth and religious liberty*. Indeed these two generally stand and fall together. Once a person has got into his hands the absolute power in *temporals*, he proceeds naturally to assume the same in *spirituals*; to model the faith and religion of his subjects, and to restrain all freedom of religious inquiry, as a necessary means, in his judgment, to the peacefulness and security of civil government; though it seems plain that if religion were left *free*, so as men were to have no *worldly interest* one way or other, that would be a more effectual means to prevent troublesome disputes and contentions. And this actually would have been the case with regard to these nations, had our enemies prevailed. Along with our civil, we have lost our religious liberty; the reformed religion would have

have been banished, and the land overspread with popish darkness. *Is it not good* then, that we enjoy *truth* as well as *peace*? That the most sacred of all rights, that of *conscience* and *private judgment*, is preserved to us; that we have the liberty of reading the scriptures; of judging freely, and professing our religious sentiments without molestation in all points that do not affect the peace of society? And dissenters in particular, when they look back upon former times, and consider the hardships their forefathers suffered in every reign from the reformation to the revolution; (or, I should rather say the taking place of the *Hanover* succession) certainly have special reason to rejoice, and be thankful for the freedom and tranquility they enjoy. What a happiness is it, that we may now serve God without fear, and worship him in the way we judge most agreeable to his will, without running the hazard of enormous fines, being confined to loathsome dungeons, or forced to seek shelter in foreign lands? We suffer no hardships now on account of religion, excepting such as are negative; I mean, our being put upon a level with the notorious and avowed enemies of the constitution, by being legally disqualified from serving his majesty and the public in any places of trust; for this very reason and no other, because we conscientiously scruple the terms of conformity. For disloyalty and disaffection to the government, is not, cannot be alleged; since when there are public ends to serve which require our assistance, the penal law is superseded as long as the necessity for our service continues. This incapacity, though it be complained of as a grievance, a hardship we are laid under

under on account of religion, and a violation of the common rights of subjects; protestant dissenters notwithstanding, when they consider the severities their predecessors suffered in former reigns, think their condition very eligible under the present administration; and are sincerely thankful for the protection and tranquillity they enjoy; that the government has put it out of the power of their enemies to harass and oppress them; who, if they were not muzzled, still retain the disposition to tear and devour. Though still, they cannot help thinking it a desirable circumstance, and what they may expect some time or other from a protestant government so mild and equitable, that this grievance should be redressed; that such a valuable body of protestants, whose loyalty has been always untainted, should be restored to their rights equally with other protestant subjects; which they think both religion and good policy concur to recommend; hurting men in any degree for their religious opinions, being, they apprehend, no way agreeable to the former; nor dividing, and consequently weakening the protestant interest, to the latter. It cannot well, we think, be taken amiss that we should thus presume to represent our grievances. To receive and hear grievances is a great part of the business of the legislature; and to redress them, their great glory. We are in a miserable condition indeed, if we may not be allowed to complain when we think we are hurt; and to give our reasons with all modesty and submission.

BUT let us consider, *secondly*, through how many risks and hazards these valuable blessings have come down to us; for our gratitude for any mer-

cy will naturally rise in propotion to the difficulty in the first purchasing, or, the danger in any future period of losing it. How often have our civil and religious liberties been in danger? And how many brave and worthy men of our ancestors have sacrificed their blood and treasure to purchase and secure to us this glorious inheritance? From abroad we have always had enemies conspiring against us; but our greatest hazards have been from attempts within our selves. It is well known, that during the whole last century almost, through a succession of several reigns, violent attempts were made to impose absolute government and popery upon these nations; all of them gloriously defeated; first, by the noble stand made for liberty against the violent and arbitrary measures of the court, by the worthy and ever memorable *patriots* of the *long parliament*; and their successors in the following reigns; to whose intrepidity and steadiness, and the spirit by their means diffused throughout the nation, we owe it, that our liberties were not utterly destroyed past redemption. And, to finish this great and noble work, when those ambitious princes had *filled up the measure of their iniquities*, God raised up king WILLIAM of *glorious memory*, who not only took care to reinstate us in the peaceable possession of our liberty and religion; but, to establish this on a sure and lasting foundation, provided that limitation of the succession which now so happily takes place; and was at first brought about so seasonably, as many of you may remember, that it cannot but be looked upon as a most remarkable interposition of divine providence in behalf of liberty and truth. For the *pit was dug, and the net spread, and our enemies travailed*

travailed with mischief and iniquity ; then God arose to plead his own cause ; and saved these valuable interests from the fatal blow ready to be struck which have since flourished, and we hope ever will, under a succession of truly protestant princes. And *lastly*, to come down to our own times ; God has given us a new instance of his favour in delivering us from a *late formidable conspiracy* against our liberties ; from a *Jacobite* insurrection, stirred up and seconded by the grand enemy of civil and religious liberty, much elated by his successes, and who was making such rapid progress, that once there seemed but a day between him and the empire of the western world. Some advantages have been gained in the course of the last war which cannot but be ground of great joy to every true lover of liberty. As first, these kingdoms have been well purged of noxious and malignant humours by the suppression of the late rebellion ; and secondly, the affairs of a neighbouring republic, our natural ally, are fixed on a better footing. It has recovered in some degree its antient lustre, and is put into the hands of a prince, who, we hope, inherits the spirit of his ancestors, and will make it the business of his life to check the ambitious views of *France*. These are advantages of no small importance to the preservation and security of our peace and truth, which afford an agreeable prospect to every well-wisher to these interests, not only for our days, but succeeding times.

LASTLY, as a strong motive to excite our thankfulness to God, let us consider, that these blessings have been preserved and continued to us, when all the nations around us almost have
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been suffered to sink into the most abject slavery and bondage. Most other nations of *Europe* were once possessed of liberty as well as we, as their histories testify ; which likewise shew the several steps by which they lost it ; through indolence and pusillanimity on one hand, and the gradual incroachments of ambition on the other. And doubtless we should long ere now been in the same condition, if God, in his good providence, who delighted in us, and chose us for his peculiar people, had not raised up some magnanimous spirits, who boldly asserted their liberties, and manfully hazarded their lives and fortunes in resisting the arbitrary measures of some of our kings ; which succeeded so well, that at length our constitution was settled on that stable and solid basis whereon it now stands. Many of our illustrious progenitors, *of whom the world was not worthy*, earnestly desired to see these happy days of *peace and truth which we see, and have not seen them ; but had trial of cruel mockings, and scourgings, of bonds and imprisonments ; being destitute, afflicted, tormented ; they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth ; and were tortured, not accepting deliverance ; but God, in his great goodness, has provided some better things for us ; and blessed are your eyes, for they see.*—Is it not good then, *that we have peace and truth in our days ?* Blessings in themselves so valuable, secured and transmitted to our times through a series of such hazards and difficulties, and continued to us, when all other nations almost are galled with the heavy yoke of civil and religious slavery.

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WHAT remains then, but that all of us be exhorted to a right improvement of this goodness of God to us; that we make him suitable returns for his distinguishing favour and mercy. ---*Let us remember with gratitude his marvellous works that he hath done; by whose good providence we find our selves in such an agreeable situation, and have got so goodly an heritage.* We owe it to divine providence that we enjoy any peace and happiness in the world; and have not been over-run and destroyed by cruel and ambitious men. He that *sets bounds to the ocean, and that stills the noise of the waves, quells likewise the tumults of the people,* and restrains the savage lusts and passions of men, otherwise the world would soon run into inconceivable disorder and confusion. God has a *book for these Leviathans,* and a *bridle* for those wild and untractable, those quarrelsome and turbulent spirits, and restrains the remainder of their wrath; so that they can go no greater lengths than he for wise and good purposes shall permit. Let us therefore *trust in the Lord with all our hearts, and praise him with joyful lips, and in all our ways acknowledge him.*----Let us, in proportion to its value and importance, prize and esteem and *stand fast in that liberty wherewith God hath made us free;* abhorring and detesting all principles that tend to slavery, and propagating the contrary all we can; the *fathers to the children making known Gods truth, and his wonderful works.*-----Let us be good subjects to that mild and gracious government we live under; offering up our continual intercessions for our king and his royal family; that they may
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long reign over these nations, to be the patrons of *liberty* and *truth*, and the happy instruments of perpetuating these invaluable blessings to us.——And, finally, as we enjoy the blessings of pure reformed religion; as we are indulged the privilege of reading the scriptures, and of free religious inquiry; let us with all freedom and impartiality search after truth ourselves, and encourage the like freedom of inquiry in others, as the only best means to the solid establishment of truth, and the detecting and overthrowing all imposture and superstition; which were at first introduced, and are still supported, by the force and dint of human authority. Truth never will flourish in the world, till every degree of spiritual tyranny and dominion over conscience be set aside; and men, delivered from the shackles and fetters of authority, be permitted without running any hazard, freely to use their own reason and understanding in religious matters. Nor without this can there be a thorough revival of practical religion. For what influence can that faith be supposed to have, which stands only *in the wisdom of men*, and is not the result of impartial inquiry, and rational conviction? different religious sentiments in this case are indeed unavoidable. Nor can this be attended with any confusion or disturbance, if men, free from pride and party spirit, and a furious intemperate zeal, will but practise the christian lesson of moderation, and *do to others as they would desire they should do to them; putting on, as the elect of God, humbleness of mind, meekness, forbearance, and charity, which is the bond of perfectness.*
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Let brotherly love continue, notwithstanding different sentiments in smaller matters. Let us not judge and despise, but forbear one another in love; and wherein we are agreed (which are the essentials of religion) let us walk by the same rule, and mind the same thing; receiving one another, as Christ also received us, to the glory of God. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. Hatred, variance, emulations and strifes, are the works of the flesh; but the fruit of the spirit, is love, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, and goodness. Hereby only shall we evidence our selves worthy of the excellent privileges and advantages we enjoy, and adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, by growing in divine wisdom and knowledge, and abounding in the fruits of piety, righteousness, and charity. The greater our means are of knowledge and information, the greater is our obligation to holiness and purity; and wickedness derives in proportion an additional aggravation and malignity. That servant which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. If ye were blind, ye should have no sin; but now, ye say, we see; therefore your sin remaineth.

F I N I S.

It is true, that we have not yet reached the point of view from which we can see the whole of the human race as one family, and as such, we are not yet able to see the rights of the individual as a member of the family. But we are beginning to see the rights of the individual as a member of the community, and as such, we are beginning to see the rights of the individual as a member of the nation.

The British Museum, London, 7 AP 80.